

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 05 COLOMBO 000106

SIPDIS

STATE ALSO PASS TO USAID  
STATE FOR TSUNAMI TASK FORCE 1  
USAID/W FOR A/AID ANDREW NATSIOS, JBRAUSE  
DCHA/OFDA GGOTTLLIEB, MMARX, RTHAYER, BDEEMER  
AID/W FOR DCHA/OFDA  
TSUNAMI RESPONSE MANAGEMENT TEAM

SIPDIS  
DCHA/FFP FOR LAUREN LANDIS  
DCHA BUREAU FOR ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR ROGER WINTER  
ANE DEPUTY ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR MARK WARD  
BANGKOK FOR OFDA SENIOR REGIONAL ADVISOR TOM DOLAN  
KATHMANDU FOR OFDA REGIONAL ADVISOR WILLIAM BERGER  
GENEVA FOR USAID KYLOH  
ROME PASS FODAG  
NSC FOR MELINE  
CDR USPACOM FOR J3/J4/POLAD  
USEU PASS USEC

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAID](#) [AEMR](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [CE](#) [MV](#)

SUBJECT: MALDIVES - EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMIS: USAID/DART  
SITREP #1

-----  
SUMMARY  
-----

1. According to the Maldives National Disaster Management Center (NDMC), as of January 12, the earthquake and tsunamis killed 82 people and 26 residents are missing in Maldives. On January 10, four USAID/Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) members conducted an assessment trip to Maldives. A USAID/DART Field Officer (FO) is posted to Maldives to assist with the coordination of relief supplies. The top needs of the Government of the Republic of Maldives (GORM) include water, cleanup of debris, and assistance with logistics/transportation. The U.S. Military will provide potable water and logistical assistance to two atolls in the southern Maldives. End summary.

-----  
Death Tolls  
-----

2. According to the NDMC, as of January 12, the earthquake and tsunamis killed 82 people and 26 residents are missing. The earthquake and tsunamis also damaged an estimated 3,997 buildings.

-----  
Current Situation and Needs  
-----

3. On January 10, two USAID/DART FOs, a Water and Sanitation Officer (WSO), and a Military Liaison Officer (MLO) traveled to Male' in Maldives. One of the USAID/DART FOs is posted to Male' to coordinate activities with the U.S. Military, the U.N., and the GORM, as well as monitor USAID grants in Maldives. The USAID/DART is coordinating closely with the U.S. Military to ensure the rapid transport of emergency relief supplies.

4. During this trip, the USAID/DART met with representatives of the Maldivian National Security Service (NSS), AirServ (an OFDA-funded aviation company), and the U.S. Military. The NSS has been coordinating relief efforts, and they emphasized the difficulties encountered moving these supplies from the Male' airport to atoll, (island cluster) to islands within the atoll, and finally to affected people in the islands. The NSS stated that volunteers who were coming to central points to receive relief supplies for distribution are no longer coming because they are now getting back to their own lives. As a result, internally displaced persons (IDPs) are now waiting for the GORM to deliver goods to them.

5. According to the NSS, the GORM has identified the three top needs as water, cleanup of debris, and assistance with logistics/transportation, in order of priority. The GORM has adequate relief supplies but has faced hurdles moving these supplies to islands. One of the problems facing the GORM is that much of the equipment/boats etc. that the GORM had been using in the relief effort was volunteered by residents, and now owners of this equipment wish to use their equipment and return to daily life.

6. The NSS expressed a need for equipment, such as bulldozers, backhoes, and excavators etc. to move debris. The U.S. Military stated that they do not have access to

such equipment but may be able to assist with transport if equipment is available. [Note. New York City authorities have stated that they can loan this type of equipment to Maldives; however the USAID/DART is awaiting further information on this offer. End Note.] Mid-sized vehicles/equipment are the best option, but there are not enough available. The NSS also reported that additional landing craft are needed to gain access to the islands to provide transport of relief supplies. (Note: The GDRM has admitted it has not yet addressed the issue of what to do with all the debris once it is cleared.)

17. The NSS stated that it needs assistance to transport goods from the main airport in Male to the seven forward coordination centers (FCCs) that have been established as regional hubs for the storage and transportation of relief supplies. Three of the islands have airstrips and all locations have warehousing capability. These FCCs will serve Thaa, Meemu, Dhaalu, Raa, and Noonu atolls in the southern Maldives, where most of the damage occurred. The GORM currently has 400 metric tons (MT) of supplies, including 100 MT of protein biscuits from the U.N. World Food Program (WFP) that they are trying to transport to the islands.

18. The USAID/DART also met with representatives from the U.N. Development Program (UNDP) and the U.N. Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team. The UNDAC representative stated that transportation needs are urgent in Maldives. The UNDAC representative emphasized the need for excavation equipment, shelter supplies, hygiene kits, and cooking kits. At present, there are approximately six non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operating in Maldives, with many small local NGOs present (representing fishermen's and women's interests).

19. The Indian and Pakistani militaries have been assisting in the relief efforts in Maldives. According to the USAID/DART, the British and French militaries also have humanitarian missions in the Maldives. The French troops are focusing upon relief efforts in northern Maldives, and the British troops are concentrating on repair of electrical equipment, such as generators, and other electricity generation capacity analysis and repair.

-----  
Water and Sanitation  
-----

10. According to the USAID/DART, water remains a critical concern in Maldives. The U.S. Military will use at least one Marine pre-positioning vessel to provide potable water to Maldives. On this vessel, water can be produced at a rate of 25,000 gallons per day, and 70,000 gallons can be stored on the vessel. Floating lines can discharge water up to two miles away. This water can be pumped to bladders on barges, such as the four being provided by the U.S. Military, which can then take the water into more shallow ports where water can be stored in community storage tanks and smaller family-sized tanks (1,000 to 3,000 liters). The vessel is scheduled to arrive in Sri Lanka on/around January 12 and should arrive in Maldives early during the week of the January 16. Reverse osmosis water purification units (ROWPUs) are available and may be used. The U.S. Military can also provide ferrying service for earth/debris moving equipment and relief supplies.

11. The U.S. Military will focus its efforts on providing water in Laamu (Haddumati Atoll) and Dhaalu (Nilandu Atoll South) in the southern Maldives. The population of Laamu Atoll is 11,318 people, and the earthquake and tsunamis killed 22 people, and 3 residents are still missing. Two-hundred and eighty five buildings were damaged. The population of Dhaalu Atoll is 4,939, and the earthquake and tsunamis killed 9 residents, and 4 people are missing. A

SIPDIS  
total of 172 buildings were damaged.

12. During this trip the USAID/DART WSO met with the Minister of Health (MOH) and the Assistant Director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The USAID/WSO reported that needs include additional water trucks to deliver water, purification of wells, and the emptying of septic tanks. Water needs will be met for three months on Laamu and Dhaalu Atolls, where the U.S. Military is assisting with the filling of available water storage tanks. Catchment systems are in need of rehabilitation/replacement, but this activity is dependent on the construction of shelters. Since 99 percent of the potable water in Maldives was in catchment systems, the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the GORM are purchasing additional tanks. The German NGO Technisches Hilfswerk (THW) is currently operating in Maldives and assisting with well-cleaning.

13. According to the USAID/DART FO in Maldives, 12 islands

have less than one week's supply of water remaining, and UNICEF is bringing in 18 ROWPUs that are due in two to three weeks.

14. The USAID/DART reports that the NDMC was established on December 26 and appears to be well-organized and operated. The NDMC maintains statistics on the amounts of water delivered to each location in Maldives.

-----  
Health  
-----

15. According to the USAID/DART, a communicable disease surveillance system exists in Maldives, but does not contain emergency aspects of disease surveillance. The health sector has a disaster preparedness plan, but does not address disasters of this magnitude. According to the USAID/DART, daily reporting of communicable diseases is required, including cases of diarrhea. The USAID/DART WSO will explore funding options for the U.N. Appeal request to cover surveillance system enhancement.

16. According to the USAID/DART FO in Maldives, the MOH has prepared a list of health centers requiring repairs, and UNICEF is working with the MOH to provide psycho-social counseling.

-----  
Shelter  
-----

17. The USAID/DART FO in Maldives reported that an assessment of permanent housing requirements is underway, but damage assessments are slow and better repair guidelines are necessary. The GORM has discussed the use of temporary shelters, and the construction of 40-room shelters to house 20 families, using materials available in Maldives. The GORM is working on these temporary shelters that are designed to last 12-18 months, will have 2-foot high sand foundations, brick and plywood walls, and corrugated iron roofs. These shelters will be built in 40 room blocks, with each room constructed to accommodate 4 people. The GORM has planned 86 temporary housing blocks throughout the country, and construction has started on 39 housing blocks.

18. The USAID/DART FO in Maldives noted that there are no clear parameters for distinguishing salvageable homes from those homes that must be destroyed. The GORM has proposed to construct 2,000 new houses for those residents affected by the tsunami. These homes will be 71 square meters in area, and will cost approximately USD 11,000 to construct.

-----  
Restoration of Other Services  
-----

19. According to the USAID/DART FO stationed in Maldives, all but five islands have electricity services, and the Red Cross will provide an additional generator which will arrive by the end of the week of January 10. In addition, all mobile phone services are operational, and landlines are functional on all but two islands.

LUNSTEAD